(c) No, Sir. The number of vacant posts, at present, are 24.

(d) and (e) Necessary action is being taken to fill-up these posts expeditiously in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

World-wide fund meet at Berlin

1616. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether at a World-Wide Fund Meet held in Berlin in October last, it was observed that "the last great stronghold of tiger in India is under siege by rich men who grind its bones to make their bread"; and

(b) if so, the specific observations and suggestions for protecting and promoting the tiger population in India made thereat and the aid offered or earmarked by the World-Wide Fund or its members for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (CAPT JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD): (a) No such observation was made at the WWF Annual Conference held in Berlin during October 21-25, 1996.

(b) The agenda for the above mentioned conference did not specifically include a discussion on the tiger situation in India. However, separate informal discussions did take place in which serious concern about the status of the tiger in India was expressed by several participants and the need for urgent action to address the situation was emphasised. Willingness to provide financial assistance was also expressed but no specific amount was earmarked or committed.

Coconut Plantations Affected by root Wilt disease

1617. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that root wilt disease has affected coconut plantations in Kerala and other parts of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the root wilt disease has also been traced in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) if so, whether ICAR is planning any steps to control this disease?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The root wilt disease has affected coconut plantations in Kerala and some adjoining parts of Tamil Nadu.

(b) No such report has been received.

(c) the strategy developed by ICAR's Central Planatation Crops Research Institutes, Kasargod (Kerala) consists of systematic eradication of all palms in the advanced stage of disease and palms infected prior to flowering. Attempts are also being made to develop resistant/tolerant lines by identifying disease free palms in 'hot-spot' areas and utilising them in the breeding programme. Some F1 hydrids of coconut have shown field tolerance since last four years in 'hot-spots'.

New Strategy for Crop Production in 8th Plan

1618 SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have adopted any new strategy during the Eighth Plan to increase crop production;

(b) if so, the crop production exepcted to be achieved on implementation of these new strategies;

(c) the progress as on date; and

(d) the details of the new strategies?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) During the 8th Five Year Plan, a Cropping System Approach has been adopted for increasing the productivity of cereal crops.

(b) and (c) The production of Cereals is likely to be 180.86 million tonnes during 1996-97 as compared to estimated production of 172.03 million tonnes during the last year.

(d) New strategy *inter-alia* includes the adoption of package of strategies like propagation of newer location specific high yielding varieties with biotic & abiotic resistance, encouraging integrated nutrient and past management, use of improved farm implements and water saving devices, in-situ moisture conservation techniques etc.

केन्द्रीय विद्यालयों में स्नातकोत्तर शिक्षकों (वाणिज्य) का अधिक होना

1619: **श्री शिव चरण सिंह:** क्या मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि विगत कई वर्षों से बहुत से केन्द्रीय विद्यालयों में वाणिज्य के स्नातकोत्तर शिक्षक अतिरिक्त संख्या में है और उन्हें अब तक अपनी तैनाती की जगह से हटाया नही गया है जबकि कुछ विद्यालयों में ऐसे अतिरिक्त शिक्षक गण अपनी-अपनी तैनाती की जगह से हटा दिए गए है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस भेद भाव के क्या कारण और औचित्य है?

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय में शिक्षा विभाग में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मुही राम सैकिया): (क) और (ख) केन्द्रीय विद्यालय संगठन में उपलब्ध सूचना के अनुसार वर्ष 96-97 में 5 पी. जी.टी. (वाणिज्य) अधिक थे। इन 5 शिक्षकों में से तीन शिक्षकों ने न्यायालय के निर्देशों के अनुसार कार्य करना जारी रखा। बाकी दो का बाहर स्थानांतरण कर दिया गया है।

दिल्ली में फलों एवं सब्जियों के मूल्यों में विविधता

1620. **श्री अजीत जोगी:** क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या दिल्ली में बिक्री काउन्टरों के माध्यम से बेचे जाने वाले फलों और सब्जियों के मूल्य प्रत्येक बूथ पर अलग-अलग होने हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण है;

(ग) गत छः महीनों के दौरान प्रति माह बेचे गये फलों और सब्जियों के विक्रय केन्द्रवार तथा वस्तुवार मूल्यों को दर्शाने वाला तुलनात्मक ब्यौरा क्या है;

(घ) सभी प्रकार के फलों और सब्जियों के मूल्यों में भिन्नता, उनकी अनुपलब्धता तथा उनके घटिया होने के संबंध में कितनी शिकायतें मिली हैं, और उन पर क्या कार्यवाही की गयी है; और

(ङ) इन विक्रय केन्द्रों के काम-काज में सुधार लाने के लिए क्या-क्या कदम उठाए गये है?

कृषि मंत्री (श्री चतुरानन मिश्र): (क) से (ङ) सूचना एकत्र की जा रही है। जिसे बाद में सदन के पटल पर रख दिया जाएगा।

Jute Production

1621. **SHRIMATI ILA PANDA:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the target of raw jute production during the Eighth Five Year Plan; and

(b) the reasons for the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The target of production of raw jute including mesta during 1996-97 i.e. terminal year of the Eighth Five Year Plan is 95.0 lakh bales. Against this target, the production during 1996-97 is expected to be 91.6 lakh bales of 180 kgs. each.

(b) The main reasons for the shortfall in production of raw jute are attributed to risks and uncertainties involved on account of the behaviour of monsoon rainfall as also other crops becoming more remunerative to the farmers.